



LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTION PARTNERSHIP

ADVANCING JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY SOLUTIONS

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Date: March 2, 2023

Re: HF 100 Cannabis legalization

Position: SUPPORT

To: House Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee

Distinguished Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of HF 100, which would legalize the possession and cultivation of cannabis and manufactured cannabis products for responsible adult use. I am representing myself, having spent my career as a police officer, and as a speaker and executive board member for the Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP).

LEAP is a nonprofit group of police, prosecutors, judges, and other criminal justice professionals who speak from firsthand experience. Our mission is to make communities safer by focusing law enforcement resources on the greatest threats to public safety, working toward healing police-community relations, and addressing the root causes of crime.

Marijuana prohibition affects families and communities by increasing the danger of drug misuse. Years ago, my son was looking to experiment with a drug but was scared away from marijuana by its illegal status. Instead, he used Spice, a synthetic drug that caused him to overdose and suffer psychological problems to this day. The drug war has not protected our children. Instead, it has increased the misuse and abuse of drugs.

When a drug is illegal, we have no control over it. Nobody needs a license to sell it, so drug dealers can sell it to young people. There is no regulation or responsibility for product quality or purity, so the product may contain mold or other toxins. Marijuana prohibition affects families and communities by increasing the danger of drug use.

LawEnforcementActionPartnership.org

Formerly known as Law Enforcement Against Prohibition

I hope Minnesota will take the smart and safe approach and legalize cannabis by passing HF 100. The bill would allow adults who are 21 or older to possess and purchase up to two ounces of cannabis and would impose restrictions on public use, increase penalties for driving under the influence of cannabis, and provide law enforcement departments with funding for training. HF 100 would create an Office of Cannabis Management to regulate and license cannabis and hemp businesses by developing comprehensive rules and determining qualifications for licensees, ensuring a legal market for cannabis products that are lab tested and safe for use.

HF 100 also would redress past injustices caused by cannabis prohibition and unequal enforcement. The bill would create a Cannabis Expungement Board to expunge criminal records for individuals who were acquitted of non-felony cannabis charges, stabilizing the futures of those with criminal backgrounds. HF 100 would also create substance use and education programs in schools to educate students about the health effects of marijuana use by children and adolescents.

Fifty years after President Nixon declared drugs to be public enemy number one, it is past time to correct the wrongs of cannabis prohibition. If HF 100 is passed, Minnesota would join Arizona, California, Nevada, and 21 other states and the District of Columbia in legalizing recreational and medical cannabis for adult use. Legalization would protect families and fight back against those profiting from the illegal marijuana market. It is a common sense and responsible approach that time has proven to be successful.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my experience in support of this bill.

Respectfully,

Sgt. Terry Blevins (Fmr.)
Gila County Sheriff's Office, Arizona
Executive Board Member, The Law Enforcement Action Partnership